

Regent's Park



Bird Report 2005

Written by Tony Duckett

Little Grebe

Summer visitor. Four pairs were present during May. Three pairs bred, rearing five young. Numbers declined from late summer, the last bird being seen on 16/11.



Little Grebe with chick

Great Crested Grebe

Resident. Four birds were present throughout the winter period. Four pairs attempted to breed, with only five young fledged.

Cormorant

Resident. Seen daily throughout the year, the winter roost peaking at over eighty birds in December. Some birds were occasionally seen carrying nesting material during spring.

Heron

Resident. Twenty-five pairs bred. Five baskets were again used successfully.

Mute Swan

Resident. One pair nested, rearing two cygnets.

Greylag Goose

Resident. Birds peaked at sixty-four during September.

Canada Goose

Resident. Birds peaked at two hundred and eighty during July.

Egyptian Goose

Occasional visitor. A pair was present on 4/11.

Mandarin Duck

Resident. Two pairs bred. Maximum number was seventeen during December.

Wigeon

Occasional winter visitor. A male on 21/1 was the only record in the early part of the year. A pair on 10/11 was joined by another male on 22/11, all three remaining to the end of the year.

Gadwall

Resident. Maximum number was nine on 6/1. Some of these birds may have originated from St. James's Park.

Teal

Winter visitor. A drake was present in the Hanover Bridge sanctuary in the early part of the year. In autumn, three birds arrived on 12/9. These were present until December, and were joined by a fourth bird on 1/11. One bird remained into the new year.

Mallard

Resident. Not a very successful breeding season, due the cool spring.

Pintail

Winter visitor. Up to three birds present during the winter period, which constitute part of the small feral population in the London area.

Shoveler

Winter visitor. Possibly due to the lack of cold weather, the numbers were unusually low, not exceeding more than twenty-five birds during the winter months.

Red-Crested Pochard

Resident. Numbers are increasing, the birds present on the lake forming part of the feral population that roams the Central London parks. Peak count was twenty-eight in December.

Pochard

Resident. Numbers peaked at more than two hundred and eighty during the winter period. Sixteen pairs bred.

Tufted Duck

Resident. Peaked at over three hundred during the winter period. Fifteen pairs bred.

Scaup

Resident. A drake remains present at the Longbridge Sanctuary, this being its ninth year.

Ruddy Duck

Resident. Numbers reached eighteen birds during the beginning and later parts of the year.

Honey Buzzard

Rare migrant. One was observed high up, drifting westwards, from the Peregrine Watch Point on 11/7.

Red Kite

Passage migrant. Numbers of sightings in the London area are increasing. The fourth, fifth, and possibly the sixth records involved sightings of two birds circling above the park at 10.00am drifting northwards, followed by another bird flying NW at 10.15am.

Sparrowhawk

Resident. Two pairs nested, one pair failing to rear any young.



Sparrowhawk female

Kestrel

Resident. Two pairs bred.

Hobby

Summer visitor and passage migrant. Another disappointing year with only one sighting on 30/8.

Peregrine Falcon

Occasional visitor. One pair nested just south of the park on a ledge of a building at the University of Westminster, three young fledging successfully. A view point was again set up on Marylebone Green to watch these birds.

Water Rail

Scarce Visitor. One was heard calling from the reed bed by Hanover Bridge on 21/12.

Moorhen

Resident. Numbers are difficult to assess because of their secretive behaviour.

Coot

Resident. Common, at times being very territorial.

Eurasian Golden Plover

Occasional migrant. Five birds flew east at 7.40am on 18/11.

Lapwing

Passage migrant. A slight increase in the number of sightings, though the actual number of birds was low. Three birds observed on 24/6, then five records from 19/9 to 27/12. The largest count was nine birds on 17/10.

Woodcock

Winter visitor. Two singles seen on the 14/3 and 27/12.

Curlew

Occasional passage migrant. Only one sighting, of a single bird flying east at 7.05am on 14/3.

Whimbrel

Occasional passage migrant. Recorded twice. Six birds flew SE in drizzle at 6.05am on 27/7, and a single bird flew SE at 7.40am on 15/8.

Green Sandpiper

Scarce visitor. A bird flew SE 15/8 at 7.20 am on a dull damp day.

Common Sandpiper

Passage migrant. A very poor year with only two sightings, on 1/9 and 4/9.

Black-Headed Gull

Winter visitor. Seen in every month of the year, Numbers peaked at over three hundred during February.

Common Gull

Winter visitor. Maximum number usually during February.

Lesser Black-Backed Gull

Summer visitor. Small numbers occur during the winter months. Birds are breeding in increasing numbers in the surrounding area.

Herring Gull

Resident. Numbers increase during the winter period. As with the above species, local breeding is also increasing.

Great Black-Backed Gull

Occasional winter visitor. One record, of two birds, on 17/11.

Yellow-Legged Gull

Winter visitor. One adult seen on 4/1, then an adult again on 19/1 and 22/1, this was probably the regular winter visitor.

Common Tern

Summer visitor. A very disappointing year. Not recorded in spring. An adult present on 13/6 and 15/6, then two birds on 26/6 and 1/7.

Black Tern

Scarce passage migrant. Recorded on two dates. Two juveniles flew SW at 6.45am on 1/9, and another juvenile spent most of the day over the lake on 10/9.

Feral Pigeon

Resident. A few pairs breed under Clarence Bridge.

Stock Dove

Resident. At least eighteen pairs bred. Birds regularly used the bird table at the Nature Study Centre, and the feeding station in the small plantation. A flock of up to fifty birds was present in the winter.

Wood Pigeon

Resident. The largest movements, seen in the autumn, involved one thousand, six hundred and fifty on 18/10, and one thousand and one hundred on 29/10.

Turtle Dove

Scarce passage migrant. Recorded only once, on the unusual date of 4/7.

Collared Dove

Passage migrant. Recorded on nine dates. Eight birds flew over on five dates in the first quarter, then singles on 11/6, 14/7, and 17/8. Unusually, there were no observations in the last quarter.

Ring-Necked Parakeet

Occasional visitor. This species is moving further into London, with birds now in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. In Regent's Park, sightings were as follows:- three on 24/1, four on 29/10, and three on 1/11.

Cuckoo

Passage migrant. One was seen perched on the slightly unusual date of 15/6.

Tawny Owl

Resident. One pair bred rearing two young, the eggs being laid around the 25/12/04.



Tawny Owlets

Swift

Summer visitor. First sighting of the year was four on 24/4, the last being two birds on 5/9.

Kingfisher

Scarce passage migrant. One circled the wetland area on 29/6, then flew towards the lake.

Green Woodpecker

Resident. Two pairs definitely bred, and probably a third pair.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Resident. Six pairs bred. Regularly use the peanut holders at the feeding station.

Skylark

Passage migrant. Recorded on slightly more dates than in the last few years, although the actual number of birds seen still remains very low. Seen only once in the first quarter on 26/4. In autumn, nineteen birds were seen on seven dates between 7/10 and 9/11.

Sand Martin

Passage migrant. Recorded on only two dates, but probably overlooked. A single bird on 7/9, followed by two on 20/9.

Swallow

Passage migrant. Twenty, through on the 15/4, were the first birds of the year. Autumn passage began with two on 31/8. A large passage on 21/9 involved more than one thousand birds. Last birds of the year were two on 12/10.

House Martin

Summer visitor. The small colony of nests on the nearby flats in Park Road was not illegally interfered with this year. The first birds of the year were three on 15/4. The largest movement of the autumn was over three hundred birds 20/9. The last record of the year was four on 14/10.

Tree Pipit

Passage migrant. Recorded on just four dates, one on 27/8, two on 7/9, and singles on 8/9 and 12/9.

Richard's Pipit

Scarce vagrant. One was heard and then seen circling the open spaces at 8.30 am before flying off SE on 15/10. A new park record.

Meadow Pipit

Passage migrant. A poor spring passage with two on 19/3 and three on 21/3. The autumn passage began on 6/9 and peaked at over two hundred and fifty on 20/9. The last sighting was on 9/11.

Rock Pipit

Scarce passage migrant. A single bird flew SW on 3/12.

Water Pipit

Scarce passage migrant. One on 4/4 was at the peak period for this species on spring passage.

Yellow Wagtail

Passage migrant. Recorded on only four dates, once in spring on 11/4, and three times in autumn with singles on 25/8 and 12/9, and nine on 20/9.

Grey Wagtail

Resident. Recorded in every month, with two pairs nesting close to the park. A small passage was noted during September; six on 19/9 and eleven on 20/9 being the largest day counts.



Grey Wagtail

Pied Wagtail

Resident. Two pairs possibly bred close to the park. A small group developed on the sports pitches from mid September to mid October, peaking at seventeen birds.

White Wagtail

Annual passage migrant. Two singles seen in spring on 31/3 and 3/4. Autumn records were:- one on 12/9, three on 1/10 and one on 4/10.

Waxwing

Scarce winter visitor. After large numbers had moved into southern England, small flocks were around the outskirts of London. On the 2/2, a flock of fourteen birds circled over St Mark's Lodge, the first record for the park. On 9/3, a flock of seventy birds fed on Rowan berries near Warren Street (SE of the park), this flock increasing to over one hundred and fifty in its three day stay. These birds were seen to fly towards the park in the evenings to roost; the roost site was never located. On the 14/3, fifteen birds flew over Queen Mary's, and in the evening of 6/4, twenty-three birds were perched in a London Plane tree. On the 14/4, six birds perched in a tree, and on the 17/4, what was almost certainly the same flock, fed on Cotoneaster berries in St Mark's Lodge. An outstanding year for the Waxwing's first appearance.



Waxwing Warren Street

Wren

Resident. Widespread in areas with suitable habitat.

Dunnock

Resident. Very secretive, easily overlooked once the males have stopped singing in spring.

Robin

Resident. Widespread in areas with suitable habitat.

Common Redstart

Passage migrant. Three sightings. A male was present in the wetland area from 7-10/4. In September, birds were seen in the leaf yard on 2/9 and 6/9.

Whinchat

Passage migrant. Again a poor year, with only two records on 4/9 and 18/9.

Northern Wheatear

Passage migrant. This year the number of bird days was slightly above average. Seen on four dates in spring between 4-27/4 peaking at four on 26/4. In autumn, birds were seen on thirteen days between 2-27/9. Numbers peaked at five on 12/9 and four on 16/9.



Northern Wheatear

Blackbird

Resident. Widespread, the numbers being boosted by the arrival of birds from the continent in late October, which stay until all the berries have been consumed.

Fieldfare

Passage migrant and winter visitor. Due to the mildness of the winter period, there were no records during the first quarter. In autumn, birds were recorded on twelve dates between 1/11 and 26/12. There were no really large movements, peak passage days saw sixty-two through on 16/11 and seventy-five on 22/11.

Song Thrush

Resident. Numbers are still low. Birds are seldom seen far away from dense cover, apart from those flying overhead during the autumn migration.

Redwing

Passage migrant and winter visitor. A wintering flock reached fifty birds in the early part of the year. A late departing bird was present from 14–18/4. The first birds of the autumn were thirty on 12/10. Peak passage days in autumn saw two hundred and fifty on 15/10, and two hundred and sixty on 2/11. Birds were then seen almost daily until the end of the year.

Mistle Thrush

Resident. No large gatherings were noted this year.

Ring Ouzel

Scarce passage migrant. A female was present on 16/4, behind St John's Lodge. This was the same location as last year's female.



Ring Ouzel

Sedge Warbler

Passage migrant. Two singles seen, one in spring on 28/4 and the other in autumn on 15/8.

Reed Warbler

Summer visitor and passage migrant. At one time, five males held territories. However, there was only one proven breeding record, near Hanover Bridge. Two migrants were seen, one in the wetland 12/8 and one in the leaf yard wood on 5/9.

Lesser Whitethroat

Passage migrant. Recorded twice in the spring on 8 and 16/5. In autumn, birds were seen on nine days comprising up to fourteen birds, with three present on the 6/9.

Common Whitethroat

Passage migrant. Numbers of this species in the countryside appear to be increasing. The park had an average showing again, with only one spring sighting on 8/5, and autumn birds recorded from 15/8 until 13/9, with three on 6/9.

Blackcap

Summer visitor. Fourteen males held territories. The peak day count in the autumn was fourteen birds on both 15/8 and 6/9. Several birds were seen during the winter months.

Garden Warbler

Passage migrant. Only one bird was seen in spring, on 10/5. Autumn passage saw only three singles, on 15/8, 28/8 and 5/9.

Wood Warbler

Passage migrant. Two single records, in spring on 30/4, and in autumn on 27/8.

Chiffchaff

Summer visitor and passage migrant. The first bird of the year was seen on 18/3; three males held territories. Peak autumn passage saw over thirty birds on 6/9. The last migrant of the year was recorded on 10/10. A wintering bird was found on 27/12.

Willow Warbler

Passage migrant. The first bird was seen on 1/4; spring numbers were low with eight on 15/4. Autumn passage commenced on 27/7 peaking at ten plus birds on 6/9. The last bird of the year was on 8/9.



Goldcrest

Resident. There is currently at least eight pairs breeding.

Firecrest

Passage migrant and winter visitor. Two records, one in the winter period on 17/2, the other on autumn passage on 6/10.

Spotted Flycatcher

Passage migrant. There were no spring records. The first autumn record was two on the 16/8. Birds were then observed sporadically until 13/9, the peak day count was five on 1/9.



Spotted Flycatcher

Pied Flycatcher

Passage migrant. A poor year, again with no spring sightings. Autumn records, which were probably two different birds, were one on 29/8 and another single from 4-6/9.

Long-Tailed Tit

Resident. At least ten pairs breeding.

Coal Tit

Resident. Six pairs breeding.

Blue Tit

Resident. Makes good use of nest boxes that have been erected in the park.

Great Tit

Resident,. Breeding in slightly less numbers than the above species.

Tree Creeper

Resident. A male was present at the beginning of the year. Unfortunately, it was presumed to have died, as it stopped singing in early March.

Jay

Resident. This species is the most secretive member of the crow family. They have now grown accustomed to using the peanut feeders.

Magpie

Resident. Numbers appear slightly down; birds have a pre-roost gathering site on Primrose Hill.

Crow

Resident. The non-breeding flock totalled ninety.

Rook

Passage migrant. Two single observations on 29/10 and 26/12.

Jackdaw

Passage migrant. Recorded on six dates; one on 11/2, four on 23/3, two on 23/3, two on 25/6 (an unusual date), five on 3/10 and five on 19/10.

Starling

Resident, passage migrant. With the new areas of rough grassland around the open spaces, which provide more food, these birds are moving away from London Zoo. Autumn passage was fairly light with one hundred and seventy on 27/10, and three hundred and fifty on 29/10.

House Sparrow

Resident in London Zoo. Only one record away from the Zoo, one being seen on the open spaces on 26/6.

Chaffinch

Resident, passage migrant. At least thirty birds fed at the feeding station in the small plantation. Autumn passage was again light, peaking at seventy on 27/10.

Brambling

Passage migrant, winter visitor. Not recorded in the first quarter. Recorded in last quarter on fourteen dates from 7/10 to 24/12, with a peak day count of twenty on 2/11. One bird fed at the feeding station in the cricket pen from 14-17/12.

Greenfinch

Resident. No significant autumn passage noted.

Goldfinch

Resident. One pair bred. Up to six birds fed in the garden by St. Mark's Bridge during the winter.

Hawfinch

Occasional passage migrant. Recorded twice. Two flew over on 26/10 and one bird was seen perched in Queen Mary's 18/12 after probably roosting overnight with a flock of finches.

Siskin

Passage migrant. In the past, numbers of this species sometimes reached three figures in late February and March; this year, there were no sightings in the first quarter. There was an unusual record of one on the 26/6 on a feeder in Nursery Lodge. Autumn records started with a single on 6/9, and then birds were recorded up until the 12/12. The peak day counts were thirty on 18/9 and twenty-two on 8/10.



Siskin

Lesser Redpoll

Passage migrant. Sightings were slightly up on last year's very poor showing, with birds seen on fourteen days. There was one spring record on 14/4, and then birds were noted from 3/10 until 25/12. The peak day count was five on 26/10.

Linnet

Passage migrant. Records of this once common farmland species also increased slightly on last year's two sightings. Singles were recorded on four dates in spring from the 4-15/4. Autumn passage was noted from early October to November, peak days saw thirty-two on 8/10 and twenty on 1/11.

Crossbill

Rare passage migrant. Two records, a single on 10/11, and five on 21/12. On both dates, the birds flew west.

Yellowhammer

Scarce passage migrant. One bird flew west, calling, on 29/10.

Reed Bunting

Scarce passage migrant. One pair probably bred; a male arrived on 15/3 and was joined by a female on 21/3. Nest building was observed but no young seen.



Reed Bunting

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to Dave Johnson for his sightings